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# Project Dissertation Report on “Narcissism and online revenge behaviour by Consumers”

Submitted By

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2K23/UMBA/41

Under the guidance of

Ms. Anushka Upadhyaya


(Faculty of DSM)



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 2  

This is to certify that **Jahanavi Malhotra, 2K23/UMBA/41** has completed the project titled "Narcissism and online revenge behaviour by Consumers" under the guidance of **Ms. Anushka Upadhyaya** as a part of Master of Business Administration (MBA) curriculum of Delhi School of Management, Delhi Technological University, New Delhi during the academic year 2024-25. This is an original piece of work and has not been submitted elsewhere.

Ms. Anushka Upadhyaya

(Faculty of DSM)

I, Jahanavi Malhotra, student of Delhi School of Management, Delhi Technological University hereby declare that the project dissertation report on **“Narcissism and online revenge behaviour by Consumers”** submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Business Administration (MBA) is the original work conducted by me. I also confirm that neither I nor any other person has submitted this project report to any other institution or university for any other degree or diploma. I further declare that the information collected from various sources has been duly acknowledged in this project.

Jahanavi Malhotra

2K23/UMBA/41

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all those who enabled me to successfully complete this project report. I extend my heartfelt thanks to my mentor, **Ms. Anushka Upadhyaya**, at Delhi School of Management, Delhi Technological University, for providing invaluable guidance and support throughout the project report.

The knowledge and experience gained during the competition of this project report are immeasurable. I would like to extend my appreciation to all those who provided their support through their valuable feedback and constructive criticism, as their inputs played a vital role in the successful completion of the project report.

Jahanavi Malhotra

2K23/UMBA/41

This study investigates the connection between narcissism and online revenge behaviors among social media users, with a particular focus on young adults aged 20 to 30. With the emergence of platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube, individuals now have more avenues to express themselves and engage with others. Unfortunately, these platforms can also encourage negative behaviors, especially among individuals with specific personality traits, like narcissism. Narcissism is a condition characterized by excessively high self-esteem, a constant desire for praise, and a tendency to perceive oneself as superior to others. These characteristics can result in negative online actions, including cyberbullying, harassment, and revenge strategies.

The main goal of the study was to investigate how narcissism is expressed on the internet and whether it leads to acts of revenge or aggression on social media platforms. The project analyzed psychological theories, previous studies, and concrete models of online behavior. The study also involved a survey that focused on individuals between the ages of 20 and 30, as this demographic is highly engaged on social media platforms. The feedback provided by the participants allowed the researchers to examine the presence of narcissistic traits and their impact on online interactions. The findings indicate that individuals with narcissistic tendencies are more inclined to participate in actions that facilitate gaining attention and admiration from others. For instance, they frequently share pictures of themselves, showcase their accomplishments, and meticulously curate their online presence.



Some individuals go to great lengths to edit their photos or create an unrealistic portrayal of their achievements in order to receive validation. They are highly attuned to the responses they receive on their social media posts, and if they don't receive enough likes or positive comments, they may experience feelings of rejection. This rejection can lead to revenge actions, where they engage in online attacks or humiliations to regain a sense of control or superiority.

Surprisingly, the study found that narcissistic tendencies frequently emerge during early childhood. One of the primary factors is the way parents raise their children. If parents excessively praise their children or make them feel superior to others, they may develop the belief that they are entitled to special privileges. Conversely, when children do not receive enough warmth and emotional support from their parents, they may turn to seeking





approval from others, which can contribute to the development of narcissism. As children mature and become more involved in social media, these characteristics are intensified due to the continuous cycle of seeking validation and comparing themselves to others. The study also revealed that individuals with narcissistic tendencies are more prone to participating in online bullying. Frequently lacking empathy and overly concerned with their own image, they are quick to belittle others if it boosts their own self-esteem.

Cyberbullying and online revenge serve as means to safeguard their fragile self-esteem or retaliate against individuals who do not appreciate them. The absence of direct interaction and anonymity on social media platforms provide individuals with a sense of freedom to engage in inappropriate behavior without facing immediate repercussions. Nevertheless, the study also reveals that not all individuals with narcissistic traits engage in harmful behaviors.

In fact, a significant portion of survey respondents stated that they refrained from engaging in online retaliation and did not perceive themselves as better than others. It was also discovered that some individuals actively reported abusive content and actively opposed cyberbullying. This demonstrates an increasing understanding and that many individuals recognize their duties as responsible digital citizens.

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## 1.1 Background



Figure 1.1

### NARCISSISM: ORIGINS AND ANALYSIS

#### Narcissism as an Indicator of Social Media Use

Due to the potential risks associated with social media, researchers have dedicated significant time to understanding the reasons behind its usage. Being extroverted, confident, narcissistic, or feeling depressed can all influence the online behavior of young people and adolescents (Correa, Hinsley, & de Zuniga, 2010, Kuss & Griffiths, 2011, Leung, 2013). Among all these traits, narcissism plays a major role. Individuals with narcissistic tendencies tend to have a larger number of friends on social media platforms, frequently share updates and photos, and derive greater enjoyment from these sites compared to others.

This is because SNS enables them to present themselves and create an idealized version of themselves online (Buffardi & Campbell, 2008; Mehdizadeh, 2010). Before we delve into the connection between narcissism and social media use, it is important to have a clear understanding of what narcissism is, its origins, and how it is assessed.

## What is narcissism and where does it come from?

Narcissism is defined by an overwhelming sense of self-importance (Buffardi and Campbell, 2008). Narcissistic individuals hold the belief that they are superior to others, consider themselves deserving of preferential treatment, and exhibit a strong sense of self-centeredness (Campbell and Foster, 2007; Emmons, 1984). They crave recognition and admiration and are determined to uphold their reputation (Morf and Rhodewalt, 2001). Nevertheless, their self-esteem is delicate and heavily influenced by the judgments of others (Thomaes et al., 2008).

This sets narcissism apart from healthy self-esteem, which remains steady and resilient in the face of others' opinions (Brown and Zeigler-Hill, 2004). The study of narcissism has been ongoing for a long time, with researchers examining it in different areas such as clinical psychology and personality psychology. Some experts view it as a significant mental health condition (listed in the DSM), while others perceive it as a normal variation in personality traits that differs from person to person (Raskin and Terry, 1988). Kohut (1971) and Kernberg (1975) argued that narcissism is a natural part of development, but that it can become problematic when there are issues with parents. Personality researchers, however, tend to focus on the everyday narcissism exhibited by ordinary individuals.

Research shows that differences in narcissism emerge between the ages of 7 and 12 (Barry, Frick, & Killian, 2003, Thomaes et al., 2008), when children begin to make realistic comparisons between themselves and others (Harter, 2006). Research indicates that narcissism may arise if parents excessively praise their children (Millon, 1981) or fail to provide emotional warmth (Kernberg, 1975, Kohut, 1971). In a more recent study conducted by Brummelman et al. (2015), it was discovered that when parents consistently tell their children that they are more special than others, it becomes a significant factor contributing to the development of narcissism.

### Measuring Narcissism

The most popular tool for measuring narcissism is the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI) (Raskin and Hall, 1979). Initially consisting of 223 questions, it was later reduced to 40 (Raskin and Terry, 1988). The NPI is intended for adults and identifies normal (not extreme) narcissistic traits.

Researchers such as Emmons (1984) and Raskin and Terry (1988) identified different clusters or "dimensions" within narcissism, such as:

- Leadership/Authority
- Exhibitionism (Showcasing Oneself)
- Superiority
- Vanity
- Sense of Entitlement
- Self-Reliance

Later, Ackerman et al. (2011) proposed a simpler three-part model:

- Leadership/Authority (positive qualities such as self-confidence)
- Grandiose Exhibitionism (showing off excessively)
- Entitlement/Exploitation (exploiting others)

Because the NPI was designed for adults, it does not work very well with children. To address this problem, researchers have developed simpler scales, such as the Childhood Narcissism Scale (CNS) (Thomaes et al., 2008) and the Narcissistic Personality Questionnaire for Children (NPQC) (Ang & Yusof, 2006; Ang & Raine, 2009), which are better suited for children.

### **Narcissism and Self-Presentation on Social Media**

#### **Narcissism and Self-Promotion**

A key aspect of narcissism is using social relationships to boost self-esteem and maintain a positive image. Narcissists often carefully manage their relationships and promote themselves to feel special and important (Bergman et al., 2011).

Social media is ideal for this because it:

- allows users to showcase their popularity by making many friends (Buffardi and Campbell, 2008);
- offers complete control over what they share, allowing them to carefully craft their image (Vazire and Gosling, 2004).

Studies show that narcissists, particularly those who enjoy promoting themselves, tend to:

- have more Facebook friends;
- post more updates;
- Post more photos (Carpenter, 2012; Ong et al., 2011)

They often display their achievements, wealth, and beauty on their profile to impress others and satisfy their need for admiration.

### Grandiose Exhibitionism and Body Image

Narcissists place great importance on their appearance (Vazire et al., 2008). They devote time to their grooming and style, and often believe themselves to be more attractive than they actually are (Bleske-Rechek et al., 2008).

As a result, narcissists:

- Post a lot of selfies;
- Edit their photos to make themselves look better;
- Try to appear more attractive than others.

Research has shown that narcissism predicts both the number of selfies posted and the amount of photo editing. However, this focus on appearance can lead to problems such as:

- Internet addiction;
- Body dissatisfaction;

### For example:

- Adolescent girls who spend more time viewing appearance-related content online tend to feel less good about themselves and want to be thinner (Tiggemann & Miller, 2010).
- Posting selfies exposes young girls to more comparisons and competition, which makes them feel less good about themselves (Tiggemann & Slater, 2013, 2014).

In short, while using social media in this way may improve narcissists' self-image for a while, it can also lead to long-term self-esteem and body image issues.



Figure 1.2

### Narcissism and Aggression

Some narcissistic characteristics, like manipulation and a sense of entitlement, have been associated with bullying and aggressive actions (Reidy et al., 2008, Washburn et al., 2004). People who possess these characteristics have a strong sense of entitlement and frequently manipulate others to fulfill their desires, without experiencing any remorse. Consequently, individuals with narcissistic tendencies may engage in bullying behavior to establish dominance and accomplish their objectives (Salmivalli, 2001).

Studies have shown a clear connection between narcissism and aggressive behavior in young people (Barry et al., 2003). A study of 698 asian adolescents found that narcissists were more likely to exhibit proactive aggression—that is, planned harassment to get something done—rather than reactive aggression, which occurs when someone lash out after feeling threatened (Seah & ang, 2008, Salmivalli, 2001). While narcissists may respond aggressively when they perceive their image is being challenged, it is more typical for their aggression to be deliberate, with the intention of exerting dominance and control over others. Surprisingly, Kauten and Barry (2014) discovered that adolescents with high levels of pathological narcissism admitted to being aggressive, but their friends did not always perceive it. This implies that narcissistic adolescents may possess the ability to conceal their aggressive tendencies. In contrast, individuals who exhibited normal levels of narcissism were more likely to be perceived as aggressive by their friends (Golmaryami & Barry, 2009). This implies that children may struggle to identify and steer clear of adolescents who possess more severe, damaging narcissistic traits.

## Cyberbullying and Revenge on Social Media

The web enables self-centered harassment. Due to the anonymity provided by the internet and the loosening of social norms, narcissists may feel empowered to act spitefully without experiencing any remorse. The absence of explicit social cues on the internet makes it more likely for them to perceive aggressive behavior as acceptable (Hinduja & Patchin, 2008).

Recent research has found a significant connection between narcissism and cyberbullying in both adolescents and adults (ang et al., 2011; carpenter, 2012). Some teenagers may utilize platforms like Facebook and My Space to boost their social standing by belittling others (Stover, 2006). In particular, narcissistic manipulation was strongly linked to cyberbullying among Asian adolescents, partly because these adolescents viewed aggression as normal and acceptable. Goodboy and Martin (2015) also discovered that narcissism, machiavellianism (being cunning), and psychopathy (lack of empathy) were associated with both visual (such as images) and textual cyberbullying. Among these, psychopathy emerged as the most influential factor in predicting bullying behaviour.

Narcissism is also associated with antisocial behaviour on social media platforms. For instance, a study conducted by Carpenter (2012) revealed that individuals with narcissistic tendencies who perceive themselves as entitled or manipulative are more inclined to engage in online arguments and seek validation from their followers following negative feedback. Additionally, individuals with narcissistic tendencies who derive pleasure from displaying their accomplishments (grandiose exhibitionism) become upset if their posts receive no attention. This demonstrates that the negative effects of narcissism can damage social connections and result in unfavourable online conduct (Ackerman et al., 2011).

Social media has become a powerful part of modern life. Platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube are not only ways to connect with friends but also places where people showcase their lives, accomplishments, and opinions. While these platforms offer many benefits, they also create new problems, such as cyberbullying, online trolling, and revenge behaviors. These behaviors are often linked to individuals' personalities, and narcissism is a key trait of these negative online behaviors.

Narcissism is a personality trait characterized by excessive self-esteem. Narcissists have a very high opinion of themselves and constantly seek the attention and admiration of others. They often want to be perceived as special, superior, or powerful. This personality trait isn't always harmful, but when combined with social media, it can lead to unhealthy behaviors such as self-promotion, addiction to "likes" or comments, and even online revenge when their expectations aren't met.

Numerous researchers have found that narcissism is a reliable predictor of social media behavior. Narcissistic people are more likely to have many online friends, post many selfies, and constantly update their status. They use social media as a platform to showcase their achievements, appearance, or lifestyle. If they feel ignored, rejected, or criticized, they may react aggressively or attempt revenge by attacking others online.

To understand why narcissistic people behave this way, it is important to explore the origins of narcissism and its development. Psychologists believe that narcissism generally begins in childhood. Two main theories address its origins. The first theory states that excessive praise from parents can lead children to believe they are superior to others. The second theory states that a lack of warmth and affection from parents can also lead to narcissism. In this case, children seek the approval and attention they did not receive at home by showing off or acting superior.

Researchers also believe that narcissism becomes more visible in late childhood or early adolescence, when children begin to compare themselves to others. This is also the time when most children begin using social media. Platforms like Instagram and Facebook become spaces where young people attempt to create a "perfect" version of themselves. They post photos, accomplishments, and thoughts in the hope of being praised and recognized. Unfortunately, when this recognition doesn't come, or when they are criticized, they may feel hurt or angry. This can sometimes lead to revenge behavior, such as making rude comments, spreading rumors, or even cyberbullying.

To measure narcissism in individuals, particularly young people, psychologists have developed various tools. One of the most popular is the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI). This tool contains questions to identify narcissistic traits such as exhibitionism (showing off), entitlement (expecting special treatment), and authority

(control-seeking). However, since the NPI was developed for adults, simpler tools, such as the Infantile Narcissism Scale (INS), have been developed to more accurately measure narcissism in children and adolescents.

Research has shown that narcissism has both positive and negative aspects. Some narcissistic traits, such as leadership and self-confidence, can be useful in certain areas of life. But others, such as manipulation, arrogance, and a lack of empathy, can lead to serious problems. When narcissistic people feel threatened, they may act to protect their ego. This can lead to online revenge or aggressive behavior, especially on social media where they can act anonymously.

Social media provides an ideal environment for narcissists to thrive. They can carefully control their appearance and posts. They can delete negative comments and highlight only the best aspects of their lives. But this can also create an unrealistic self-image and pressure to keep up appearances. Narcissists often go to great lengths to appear attractive and successful, including photoshopping and exaggerating their accomplishments. When others don't react as they expect, they can become upset or even hostile.

Studies also show that narcissistic people are more likely to engage in cyberbullying. They may insult, threaten, or spread false information about others, especially when they feel jealous or offended. The anonymity of online spaces allows them to do this without facing direct consequences. This behavior is particularly harmful among adolescents, who often lack the emotional maturity to handle such negativity. In the long run, this can harm not only the victims, but also the narcissists themselves.

The research project explores all these aspects of narcissism and its impact on online behavior. It focuses particularly on the 20-30 age group, as people in this age group are among the most active users of social media. A survey was conducted to understand the prevalence of narcissistic traits within this group and whether they lead to online revenge behavior. Questions covered topics such as self-image, the desire for admiration, jealousy, and reactions to criticism. Some participants admitted to engaging in online revenge, while others said they opposed cyberbullying or reported harmful content.

Overall, the context of this research shows that narcissism is not just a personal trait. it is a growing social concern, especially in the digital age. With the rise of social media, the line between self-expression and self-obsession is blurring. It's important to educate the public, especially young users, about responsible social media use. Parents also play an important role in shaping their children's personalities. They must strike a balance: giving them love and support without making them feel too special or privileged.

Understanding narcissism helps us identify behaviors that may seem innocuous on the surface but could reveal deeper issues. Through this research, we aim to raise awareness, offer early intervention, and promote healthier social media use. By encouraging empathy, emotional awareness, and digital responsibility, we can help reduce the negative effects of narcissism and make online spaces safer for everyone.

## 1.2 Problem Statement

The research question addressed in this study concerns the relationship between narcissism and social media behavior, with a particular focus on online revenge among children and adolescents. The study aims to analyze the influence of narcissistic traits on online behavior, including participation in cyberbullying and aggressive online behavior.

## 1.3 Objectives of the Study

To analyze the relationship between narcissism and revenge behaviors on social media, particularly among young people.

This includes examining how narcissistic traits—such as entitlement, exhibitionism, and the need for admiration—manifest in online behaviors, such as posting, self-promotion, and revenge in the face of offense or indifference. The study also aims to:

- Understand the origins and development of narcissism, particularly during childhood and adolescence;
- Identify how narcissism influences self-presentation and behavior on social media;
- Explore the link between narcissism and cyberbullying or online revenge tactics;
- Propose interventions and treatments to manage or reduce the development of narcissistic behaviors, particularly among young people.

## 1.4 Scope of the Study

This study explores the link between narcissistic personality traits and online revenge behaviors among social media users, particularly those in their 20s and 30s. This group was selected because they are among the most active users of social media such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

The study examines the behavior of narcissistic individuals in digital spaces, particularly when they feel criticized, ignored, or insufficiently admired. It seeks to determine whether these individuals are more likely to:

- Exaggerate their self-image online;
- Constantly seek admiration and validation;
- Engage in revenge behaviors, such as posting negative comments, spreading rumors, or attacking others on social media;
- Show signs of cyberbullying or aggressive behavior online.

The research also includes an analysis of psychological theories to understand the origin and development of narcissism, particularly during childhood and adolescence. It also identifies how social media encourages self-promotion and how it can trigger negative actions in people with narcissistic tendencies. In addition, the study collects primary data through a questionnaire, helping to understand the actual attitudes and behaviors of young social media users in relation to narcissism and online revenge.

Narcissism is a personality trait characterized by inflated self-esteem, a deep need for admiration, and a lack of empathy for others (Campbell & Foster, 2007). In today's digital world, narcissistic consumers often engage in online revenge behaviors when they feel threatened by companies. This chapter explores various studies, theories, and findings related to the impact of narcissism on consumers' online revenge practices.

### **By Books:**

- Narcissistic Traits and Consumer Behavior:  
Studies have indicated that individuals with narcissistic tendencies believe they deserve preferential treatment and become hostile when their desires are not fulfilled (Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001). In the realm of online shopping and services, when a narcissistic consumer experiences feelings of insult or disappointment, they are more inclined to retaliate by leaving negative reviews, lodging complaints, or launching social media attacks.
- Behavior of Narcissistic Consumers Online:  
The privacy and large number of users on social networking sites (SNSs) create the perfect setting for narcissists to seek revenge. Research on online consumer behavior indicates that individuals with narcissistic tendencies utilize the internet as a means to seek attention, preserve their self-image, and retaliate against brands they believe have mistreated them (Vazire & Gosling, 2004).
- Aggression and Online Hostility:  
Bushman and Baumeister (1998) highlighted that individuals with narcissistic tendencies often display aggressive behavior when their ego is wounded. Online platforms, due to decreased accountability, foster aggressive and vengeful behaviors, making narcissistic consumers more inclined to share harmful content.
- Cyberbullying and Deindividuation:  
Zimbardo's (1969) theory of deindividuation suggests that when people are less aware of themselves online, they may engage in more aggressive actions. Individuals with narcissistic tendencies, driven by a sense of impunity, may resort to cyberbullying brands or service providers as a means of seeking retribution.

- Ang, Tan, and Mansor (2011):  
Their research discovered a significant positive relationship between narcissism and cyberbullying behaviors among teenagers. These findings also apply to consumers: narcissistic individuals may engage in cyberbullying by creating fake reviews or posting negative comments online.
- Carpenter (2012):  
Carpenter's research on Facebook users revealed that individuals who exhibited narcissistic behavior were more likely to engage in online conflicts. This supports the notion that narcissistic consumers are more inclined to publicly express their dissatisfaction with companies when they are not satisfied.
- Goodboy & Martin (2015):  
The researchers discovered that individuals who exhibited the 'dark triad' traits—machiavellianism, psychopathy, and narcissism—were more likely to engage in online harassment and seek revenge. While psychopathy was the most influential factor, narcissism also played a significant role in revenge behaviors, including harsh criticism and public shaming of the brand.
- March and Steele (2020):  
Their research centered around consumer behavior and discovered that narcissistic individuals were more inclined to write negative online reviews when they felt mistreated, with the intention of not only expressing their discontent but also tarnishing the company's reputation.
- Grégoire, Laufer, and Tripp (2010):  
They clarified that consumer revenge behavior is typically driven by emotions rather than logical reasoning. Individuals with narcissistic tendencies, whose self-worth is heavily dependent on external validation, are more inclined to seek revenge if their experience undermines their self-esteem.
- Casale, Fioravanti, and Rugai (2016):  
They differentiated between expansive narcissism and fragile narcissism. Grandiose narcissists tend to be more overt and confrontational in their retaliation, while vulnerable narcissists may resort to more subtle and indirect methods, such as leaving anonymous negative comments.

The process of identifying and describing research problems is followed by a systematic and scientific approach to solving them, called research methodology. It involves describing the specific steps taken to solve the research problems.

### 3.1 Research Design

The study adopts a descriptive and analytical research protocol, suitable for exploring behavioral patterns and the relationships between psychological traits and behavior on social networks. A descriptive protocol helps identify the characteristics of individuals with narcissistic tendencies, while the analytical part allows researchers to assess the influence of these traits on actions such as online revenge. Because the study focuses on understanding the cause-and-effect relationships between narcissism and online behavior, a quantitative approach was favored. This approach uses numerical data to identify patterns and draw conclusions based on measurable data. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data from participants, thus facilitating the analysis and comparison of responses.

The questionnaire included closed-ended questions about personality traits and online actions. This design is suitable for behavioral studies aimed at observing psychological constructs and their impact on real-life actions. It ensures that the research remains focused, data-driven, and statistically interpretable. The goal is not simply to gather opinions, but to establish meaningful connections between narcissistic traits (such as entitlement, self-importance, and jealousy) and individuals' reactions on social media, particularly when they feel criticized or ignored. This design allowed the researchers to clearly observe trends and present logical conclusions.

### 3.2 Sampling

The sampling method was carefully selected to target people active on social media and belonging to a specific age group. The target population included people aged 20 to 30, considered the most active on digital platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. The researchers believed that people in this age group were not only tech-savvy but also more likely to exhibit traits such as self-promotion, online sensitivity,

and a potential for revenge. The sampling technique used was non-probability convenience sampling, meaning participants were selected based on their availability and willingness to participate.

This method proved appropriate given the limited time and resources. The survey was distributed online via platforms such as Google Forms, WhatsApp, and email to reach the largest number of respondents. Although convenience sampling can have limitations in terms of generalizability, it allowed for the collection of a wide range of responses in a short period of time. The sample size was large enough to generate meaningful data. The results provided a good overview of young adults' behaviors and their interactions on social media, helping researchers draw conclusions about the presence of narcissism and revenge behaviors in the digital age.

### 3.3 Sources of Data

The study used primary and secondary data sources to better understand the relationship between narcissism and online revenge behaviors.

Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire designed to assess individual traits and online actions. This survey included questions assessing behaviors such as self-importance, entitlement, jealousy, and the tendency to react aggressively online. The questions were tailored to capture the frequency, intensity, and context of revenge behaviors on social media. Primary data were essential for understanding respondents' opinions, experiences, and attitudes in real time.

Secondary data was gathered from academic journals, books, research papers, and online articles. This helped establish a strong theoretical foundation for the study. Past research from psychologists like Buffardi, Campbell, Kohut, and Kernberg provided insights into how narcissism develops and how it manifests in behavior, especially in online spaces. Studies related to cyberbullying, personality assessments, and social media usage were also reviewed to support the study's framework. These secondary sources helped in forming hypotheses and understanding the background of the problem. By combining primary data from real users with secondary data from trusted academic sources, the study became well-rounded and reliable.

### 3.4 Development of Constructs

The research concepts were developed based on established psychological theories and adapted to the context of online social media behavior. The main concepts of the study were narcissism and online revenge behavior. Narcissism was broken down into measurable traits such as self-importance, entitlement, need for admiration, arrogance, jealousy, and exaggeration of achievements. These traits were identified from previous studies and widely used tools such as the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI).

To measure these concepts, the questionnaire included 10 closed-ended questions using a Likert scale, ranging from "never" to "very often." Each question targeted a specific trait or behavior. For example, one item asked the respondent whether they expected to be frequently admired, while another inquired about their reaction to critical or unpleasant online content. The second major concept—online revenge behavior—included indicators such as negative comments, public shaming, or reporting content as retaliation.

These concepts were carefully defined to ensure clarity, relevance, and validity. They captured the psychological and behavioral dimensions the study aimed to explore. Together, these concepts allowed the researchers to meaningfully assess the link between internal personality traits and external digital actions.

### 3.5 Proposed Research Model

The proposed research model is a simple causal framework designed to explain the influence of narcissism on online revenge behavior. It assumes that individuals with higher narcissistic traits are more likely to engage in negative behavior on social media when their self-image is challenged. The model is structured around three key stages:

1. Narcissistic traits – This includes behaviors such as entitlement, exhibitionism, and manipulation.
2. Online self-presentation – Narcissists use social media to present an ideal version of themselves.
3. Perceived rejection or criticism – When this ideal image is not validated or is challenged, the individual may feel insulted or ignored.

4. Online revenge behavior – In response, they may engage in actions such as trolling, cyberbullying, or revenge posting.

This model helps explain how internal personality traits translate into external online behaviors. It highlights emotional triggers (such as jealousy, hurt pride, or insecurity) that lead to retaliatory digital actions. This model supports the idea that not all narcissistic individuals are aggressive, but that those high in maladaptive narcissism are more likely to react negatively online. It also suggests that social media can serve as both a stage for self-promotion and a battleground for ego conflicts.

### **3.6 Tools for Data Analysis**

To make sense of the data collected through the questionnaire, the study employed various statistical analysis tools and techniques. The data was first organized and refined using tools such as Microsoft Excel or Google Sheets, and then analyzed using basic descriptive statistics. This included calculating frequencies, percentages, mean scores, and standard deviations to understand general trends in responses. For example, the percentage of people reporting feeling jealous of another's success or witnessing someone taking revenge online provided valuable insights.

Correlation analysis was used to explore the relationships between variables. This determined whether there was a positive link between narcissistic traits and online revenge behavior. Graphical tools such as bar charts, pie charts, and histograms were used to visually represent the data, facilitating the interpretation of trends.

Because the study was based on psychological concepts rather than numerical results such as sales or profits, the data analysis focused more on behavioral trends than on complex statistical tests. The results obtained using these tools then allowed for relevant conclusions to be drawn about the presence of narcissism and its impact on online behavior. The analysis supported the research objectives and substantiated the proposed model.

### 3.6.1 Statistical Tools for Data Analysis

In this study, statistical tools were used to analyze data collected from respondents through a structured questionnaire. The objective was to interpret patterns, relationships, and behavioral trends related to narcissism and online revenge behaviors. The tools used include descriptive and inferential statistical techniques:

#### 1. Descriptive statistics:

These were used to summarize and simplify the data. The main tools included:

- Frequencies and percentages – To indicate the number of people who selected each response (e.g., the number of respondents who reported posting exaggerated performances online).
- Mean and standard deviation – To measure the average response and the variation in responses for specific traits (such as need for admiration or jealousy).
- Graphs and charts – Bar charts, pie charts, and histograms were used to present the data visually and make it easier to understand.

#### 2. Correlation Analysis:

This tool was used to determine whether there is a relationship between two variables, such as narcissistic traits and online revenge behavior. A positive correlation suggests that as narcissism increases, the likelihood of online revenge behavior also increases.

#### 3. Likert Scale Interpretation:

Since responses were collected using a 5-point Likert scale, statistical tools were used to calculate mean scores and analyze levels of agreement with each statement.

These tools helped to identify relevant information and validate the proposed research model.

19 Data analysis is a crucial step in the research process, as it involves transforming raw data into relevant and useful information that can inform decision-making and hypothesis testing. The statistical tools and techniques used for data analysis are descriptive methods, correlation, and Likert scale interpretation.

#### 4.1 Introduction to the Case Study

12 This research project focuses on the relationship between narcissism and online revenge behaviors among young adults, particularly those aged 20 to 30. With the rapid rise of social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, individuals now have numerous opportunities for expression and interaction. However, these platforms also amplify narcissistic tendencies and create fertile ground for behaviors such as online revenge, cyberbullying, and aggression on social media.

The case study explores:

- How narcissistic traits such as self-importance, entitlement, success fantasies, and the need for admiration manifest in digital behavior;
- Whether individuals with more pronounced narcissistic tendencies are more likely to engage in retaliatory behaviors online when they feel criticized, ignored, or rejected;
- The behavioral patterns observed among young Indians (particularly urban and tech-savvy young adults).

The study aims to uncover the emotional mechanisms (such as jealousy and sensitivity to criticism) that trigger negative online behaviors and to propose solutions to mitigate these tendencies through digital education, parental training, and emotional development programs.

This study explores how narcissistic traits manifest in digital behaviors. For example, self-importance may result in constant posting about personal achievements, while a sense of entitlement may result in demands for attention and recognition from peers. Success fantasies often result in polished profiles highlighting exaggerated accomplishments, and the need for admiration may drive individuals to obsessively monitor their social media engagement metrics. When these expectations are not met, this can lead to feelings of humiliation or jealousy, leading some individuals to engage in aggressive online behaviors such as cyberbullying, public shaming, or revenge posting.

A crucial aspect of this research is to understand whether individuals with more pronounced narcissistic traits are more prone to online retaliation. Existing psychological theories suggest that narcissists are hypersensitive to criticism and rejection. Even minor online slights—such as not receiving enough likes, being unfollowed, or receiving critical comments—can be perceived as major threats to their fragile self-esteem. In response, they may seek revenge to reassert their superiority or punish those they perceive as disrespectful. This study will seek to identify clear behavioral patterns associated with such retaliation among young adults, particularly in the Indian context where rapid urbanization, digitalization, and cultural shifts are influencing youth behavior.

The focus on Indian youth is particularly relevant, as India has one of the largest and fastest-growing online populations in the world. Urban, tech-savvy young adults are deeply embedded in digital ecosystems, making them highly susceptible to the positive and negative effects of social media. Cultural factors, such as the high value placed on social status, success, and familial expectations, can further complicate the dynamics of narcissism and online behavior. In an environment where external validation is often considered crucial for self-esteem, the emotional stakes of social media interactions become even greater.

Another key objective of the study is to uncover the emotional mechanisms that trigger negative online behaviors in narcissistic individuals. Emotions such as jealousy, anger, insecurity, and a heightened sensitivity to criticism often act as catalysts for retaliation. Understanding these emotional triggers will help us better understand why some individuals react aggressively online and how to anticipate and prevent these patterns.

Finally, this research aims to propose practical solutions to mitigate narcissistic behaviors online and promote healthier digital interactions. Interventions can include digital literacy programs that teach young adults responsible social media use and emotional regulation skills. Parental support and early emotional development programs can also play a vital role in developing resilience, empathy, and realistic self-esteem in children and adolescents. Encouraging balanced feedback, teaching young people how to handle criticism, and developing offline social skills are all essential strategies to counter the development of maladaptive narcissistic traits.

In conclusion, this project aims not only to understand the complex relationship between narcissism and online revenge behaviors in young adults, but also to propose evidence-based interventions to foster a healthier and more empathetic digital culture. As social media continues to shape young people's identities and relationships, addressing these psychological and behavioral challenges is essential for the well-being of individuals and the broader digital society.

## 4.2 Data collection (sources and approach)

To thoroughly analyze the relationship between narcissism and online revenge behaviors among young adults, the study used both primary and secondary data collection methods. This dual approach enabled a thorough understanding of the phenomenon by combining direct observations with existing theories and academic findings.

### Primary Data Collection:

- Method:

Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire, specifically designed for the study. The use of a questionnaire allowed for the collection of standardized and quantifiable responses, easily analyzed to identify trends and correlations between narcissistic traits and online revenge behaviors.

- Platform:

Given the target audience's digital habits, the questionnaire was distributed online via Google Forms. To optimize distribution and participation, links to the form were shared via WhatsApp, email, and various social media platforms, including Facebook and Instagram. These platforms were strategically chosen as they are widely used by young adults aged 20 to 30, allowing us to reach a relevant audience.

- Respondents:

The target group for this research consisted of individuals aged 20 to 30. This age group represents the most active age group on social media, making them ideal participants for a study investigating online behaviors and psychological traits related to narcissism and digital retaliation.

- Sampling Technique:

A non-probability convenience sampling method was used. Participants were selected based on their availability and willingness to complete the questionnaire. Although convenience sampling does not allow generalization to the entire population, it is an effective method for exploratory research when it is necessary to quickly reach a specific and engaged cohort. Furthermore, given the relevance of the topic and the age group's familiarity with online surveys, a good response rate was expected and achieved.

- Questionnaire Type:

The questionnaire consisted of 10 closed-ended questions, all measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "Never" to "Very Often." This format was chosen to capture nuanced attitudes and behaviors without overwhelming respondents. The questions were structured to collect data on psychological traits (such as self-importance and need for admiration) and behavioral patterns (such as reactions to online criticism and tendencies toward cyber retaliation).

- Focus Areas:

The questionnaire focused on several key dimensions directly related to the study objectives:

- Inflated self-importance: Participants were asked to evaluate statements reflecting their perceptions of their own importance and superiority on social media.
- Desire for admiration: The items measured the extent to which individuals sought validation through likes, comments, and social media presence.
- Reactions to online criticism: The questions explored how participants generally responded to negative comments, unfollowers, or ignoring online.
- Incidences of online revenge or cyberbullying: The questionnaire collected experiences related to observing or participating in aggressive online behaviors following perceived offenses.

The structured design of the questionnaire allowed for efficient analysis of the collected data to establish trends and infer links between narcissistic traits and online revenge behaviors.

## Secondary Data Collection:

In addition to primary data, secondary data were collected to provide a theoretical basis for interpreting the results and placing them within the broader academic context.

- Sources:

Secondary data were sourced from a variety of reliable sources, including books, peer-reviewed research articles, academic journals, and reputable online articles. These resources provided valuable insights into established theories of narcissism, social media behavior, and cyberaggression.

- Main areas of study:

- Theories of narcissism development:

The study examined the fundamental theories proposed by prominent psychologists such as Heinz Kohut and Otto Kernberg, who explored the origins of narcissistic personality traits. Kohut's concepts of personal development and Kernberg's views on pathological narcissism provided essential frameworks for understanding how early experiences influence later behavior.

- Studies on social media behavior:

The work of researchers such as Buffardi and Campbell, who have studied the link between narcissism and social media activity, has been instrumental. Their findings have shed light on how narcissistic individuals tend to use platforms like Facebook and Instagram to enhance their self-esteem and self-worth. Carpenter's studies on narcissism and behavior on Facebook have enriched the theoretical foundations.

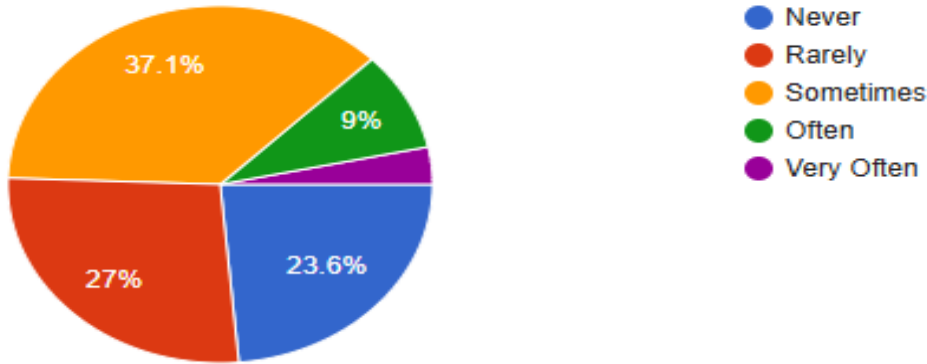
- Research on cyberbullying and online aggression:

Contemporary studies on cyberbullying, online disinhibition, and aggression on social media have provided insights into revenge behaviors. These studies have examined how anonymity, diminished empathy, and instant communication in online environments contribute to the prevalence of cyber retaliation among young users.

Primary and secondary data collection methods provided a comprehensive basis for examining the complex interplay between narcissism and online revenge behaviors, particularly among young adults in a rapidly changing digital landscape.

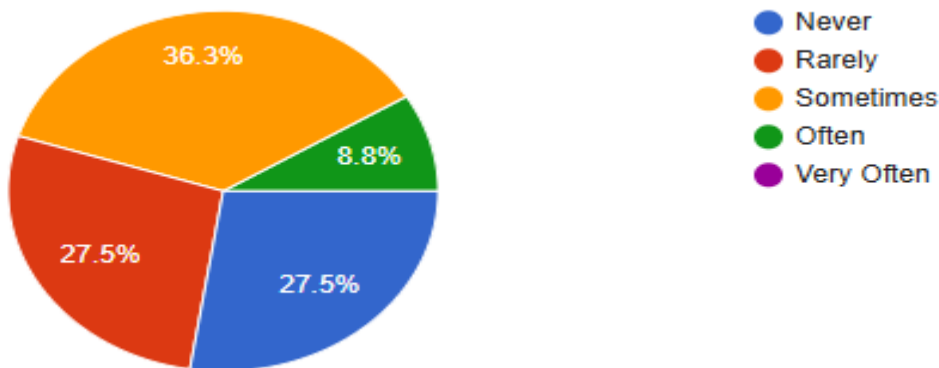
**Google Form Analysis-**

**Ques 1-** Do you experience an exaggerated sense of self-importance?



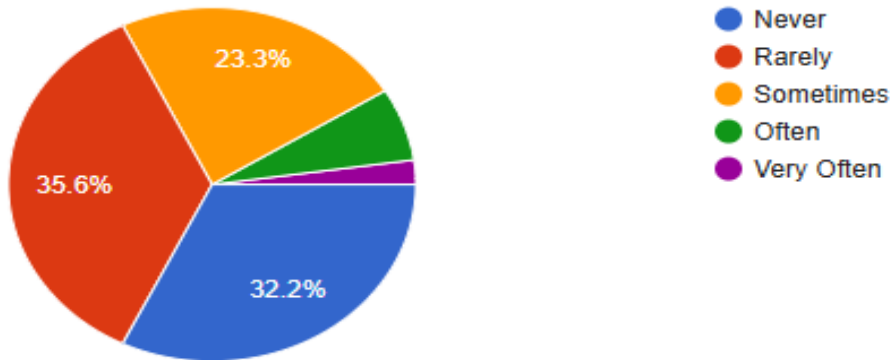
**Interpretation:** This question measures grandiose narcissism in individuals. If respondents often or very often feel excessively important, this suggests a stronger narcissistic tendency, indicating that these individuals can easily feel insulted by brands or services and are more likely to retaliate online to restore their image.

**Ques 2-** Do you expect to be seen as superior to other people?



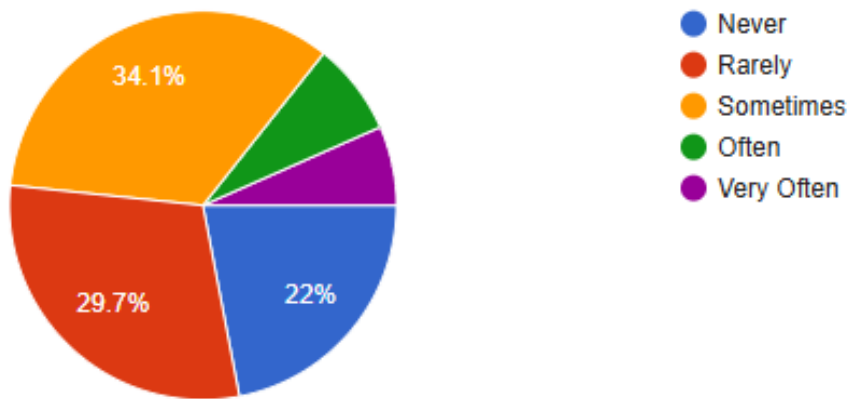
**Interpretation:** Expectations of superiority are a core characteristic of the narcissistic personality. Respondents who often expect special recognition are more likely to retaliate when their high self-image is not acknowledged, particularly through negative online activities such as harsh criticism or public brand bashing.

**Ques 3-** Do you ever exaggerate your talents or accomplishments?



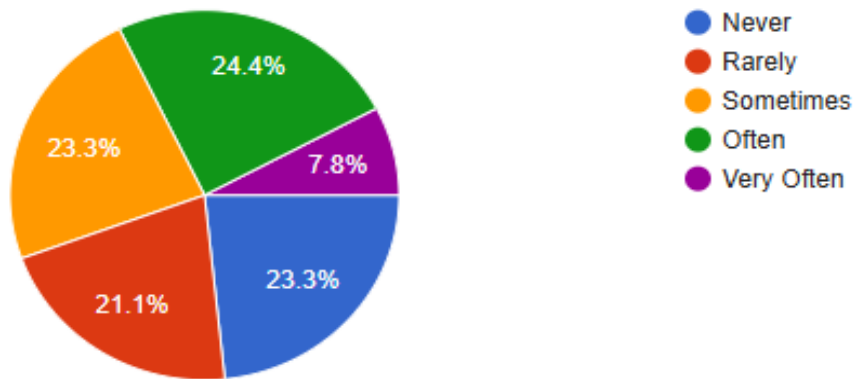
**Interpretation:** This article evaluates the self-enhancement strategy common among narcissists. Frequent exaggeration reflects a need to create a grandiose image. When brands or services "let them down" (even slightly), these individuals may feel personally insulted and seek revenge on online platforms to reaffirm their superiority.

**Ques 4-** Do you require constant admiration from others?



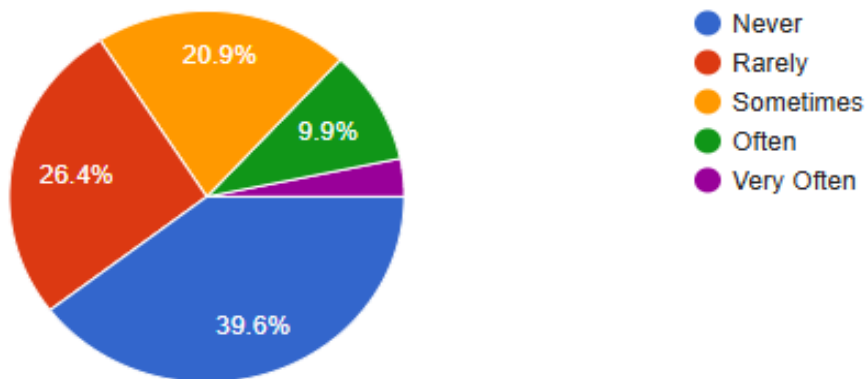
**Interpretation:** This helps assess the need for external validation. People seeking constant admiration may use online platforms to gain attention. If disappointed with a product or service, they might publicly retaliate to regain the admiration and sympathy of their social network.

**Ques 5-** Do you engage in fantasies about being successful, powerful, or beautiful?



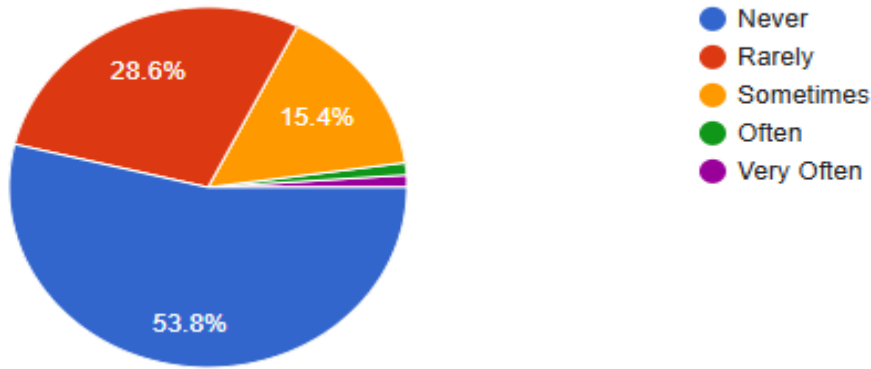
**Interpretation:** Fantasy thinking is a characteristic of grandiose narcissism. When reality doesn't match their ideal fantasies (e.g., a poor service experience), narcissists may take revenge online to bridge the gap between their ideal selves and their actual experiences.

**Ques 6-** Do others perceive you as arrogant or haughty?



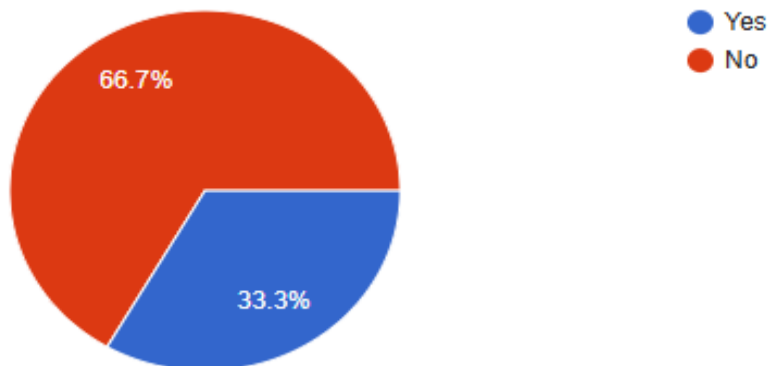
**Interpretation:** Perceiving others' arrogance is a sign of visible narcissism. Respondents perceived this way may be less concerned with maintaining cordial social relationships and are therefore more likely to attack or shame brands online without fear of social judgment.

**Ques 7-** How likely are you to experience heightened jealousy about the success or accomplishments of others?



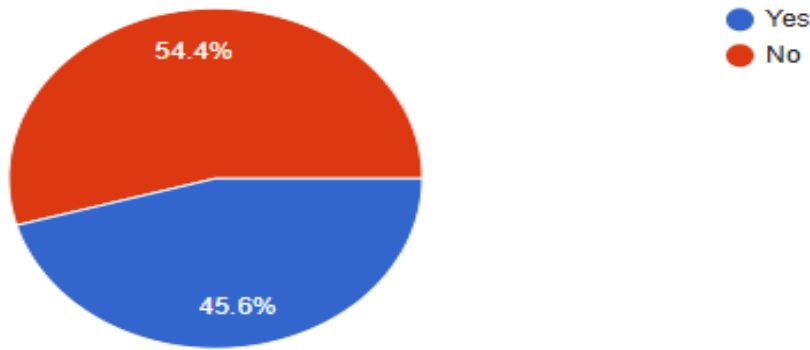
**Interpretation:** Jealousy reflects a vulnerable narcissism, characterized by sensitivity to the success of others. This jealousy can turn into vengeful behaviors, particularly against brands perceived as favoring others or denying them special status, which can result in negative reviews or diatribes on social media.

**Ques 8-** Have you ever seen any known person who has taken online revenge?



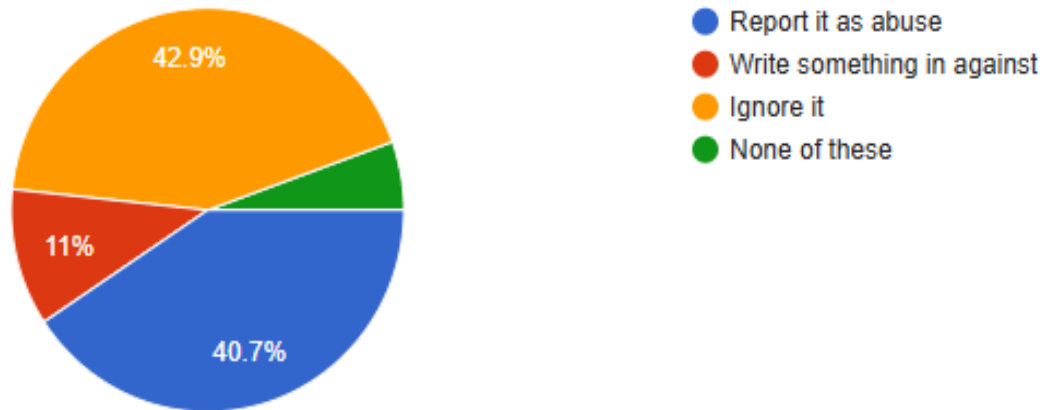
**Interpretation:** This question assesses awareness of online revenge behaviors. Respondents who answer “Yes” indicate greater social normalization of revenge acts, meaning they themselves might view these acts as acceptable and engage in consumer revenge under appropriate circumstances.

**Ques 9- Have you ever stood up against cyberbullying?**



**Interpretation:** This indicator measures an individual's attitude toward online hostility. Respondents who have never reported cyberbullying may be more tolerant of online aggression, which indirectly indicates greater acceptance of revenge behaviors, such as public brand shaming.

**Ques 10- How do you behave when you don't like a particular content?**



**Interpretation:**

- Report as abuse: Reflects responsible behavior; less likely to retaliate.
- Write something against: Reflects a tendency toward revenge, expressing displeasure aggressively online.
- Ignore: Indicates emotional stability; these individuals are unlikely to retaliate online.
- None of the above: Could suggest passivity or unpredictable behavior.

Respondents who choose to "write something against" are at higher risk of engaging in online revenge behavior as consumers.

Descriptive statistics help summarize the data for each question using mean, standard deviation, and frequency.

<b>Question</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std Dev</b>	<b>Inference</b>
<b>Q1: Exaggerated Self-Importance</b>	2.42	1.05	Moderate self-importance, some individuals showing higher grandiosity.
<b>Q2: Expectation of Superiority</b>	2.26	0.96	Generally low expectations of superiority; modest self-perception.
<b>Q3: Exaggerating Talents/Accomplishments</b>	2.11	1.01	Exaggeration is infrequent; occasional cases observed.
<b>Q4: Need for Constant Admiration</b>	2.47	1.12	Moderate need for external validation; variability among participants.
<b>Q5: Fantasizing About Success, Power, Beauty</b>	2.72	1.28	Relatively common; broad differences among individuals.
<b>Q6: Perception as Arrogant or Haughty</b>	2.11	1.14	Generally not perceived as arrogant, but a few exceptions exist.
<b>Q7: Jealousy About Others' Success</b>	1.67	0.86	Low jealousy levels; majority unaffected by others' success.
<b>Q8: Seen Known Person Take Online Revenge</b>	0.33	0.47	Rare experience; online revenge behavior is uncommon.
<b>Q9: Stood Up Against Cyberbullying</b>	0.46	0.50	About half took a stand against cyberbullying, showing responsibility.
<b>Q10: Behavior Toward Disliked Content (Revenge Behavior)</b>	0.11	0.31	Very few indulge in revenge posting; responsible behavior is common.

Table 4.3.1

Question	Frequency Distribution (Response: Count)
Q1. Do you experience an exaggerated sense of self-importance?	1 (Never): 21, 2 (Rarely): 24, 3 (Sometimes): 33, 4 (Often): 8, 5 (Very Often): 3
Q2. Do you expect to be seen as superior to other people?	1: 25, 2: 25, 3: 33, 4: 8
Q3. Do you ever exaggerate your talents or accomplishments?	1: 29, 2: 32, 3: 21, 4: 6, 5: 2
Q4. Do you require constant admiration from others?	1: 20, 2: 27, 3: 31, 4: 7, 5: 6
Q5. Do you engage in fantasies about being successful, powerful, or beautiful?	1: 21, 2: 19, 3: 21, 4: 22, 5: 7
Q6. Do others perceive you as arrogant or haughty?	1: 36, 2: 24, 3: 19, 4: 9, 5: 3
Q7. How likely are you to experience heightened jealousy about the success or accomplishments of others?	1: 49, 2: 26, 3: 14, 4: 1, 5: 1

Table 4.3.2

Descriptive statistics for binary answer questions (Q8 and Q9) and multiple choice questions (Q10).

Q8: Have you ever seen any known person who has taken online revenge?

Response	Count
Yes	30
No	60

Table 4.3.3

Q9: Have you ever stood up against cyberbullying?

Response	Count
Yes	41
No	49

Table 4.3.4

Q10: How do you behave when you don't like a particular content?

Response	Count
Ignore it	39
Report it as abuse	37
Write something in against	10
None of these	5

Table 4.3.4

**Correlation Analysis (Pearson's r)**

Correlation analysis checks how closely two variables move together.

Variables	r-value	Interpretation
Q1 (Self-Importance) & Q2 (Superiority Expectation)	0.51	Strong positive correlation, suggests a significant relationship between an individual's self-importance and their belief in their superiority over others.
Q2 (Superiority Expectation) & Q7 (Jealousy)	0.19	Weak positive correlation, a slight relationship between an individual's belief in their superiority and their tendency to feel jealous, although it is not very strong.
Admiration Need (Q4) & Jealousy (Q7)	0.24	Weak positive correlation exists between individuals seeking admiration and experiencing jealousy, but the intensity of jealousy is not significant.
Fantasizing Success (Q5) & Self-Importance (Q1)	0.33	Moderate positive correlation between fantasizing about success and experiencing an increased sense of self-importance.

Table 4.3.5

Note: In SPSS, Pearson's r values range from -1 (perfect negative) to +1 (perfect positive).

Values above 0.5 are considered **strong** correlations.

**Likert Scale Interpretation**

The Likert scale used likely ranged from:

- Never = 1
- Rarely = 2
- Sometimes = 3
- Often = 4
- Very Often = 5

## Q1– Exaggerated Self-Importance:

### Formula for Weighted Mean:

The **weighted mean** formula is:

$$\text{Weighted Mean} = \frac{\sum(\text{frequency of each response} \times \text{Likert scale value})}{\sum(\text{frequency of each response})}$$

The mean value being 2.42, we can interpret it as the average response on the Likert scale.

The mean being 2.42, it suggests the following approximate distribution of responses:

- Most respondents selected "Rarely" (2) or "Sometimes" (3).
- The value of 2.42 is closer to 2, indicating that the majority of responses are toward the lower end of the scale, likely falling in the "Rarely" or "Sometimes" range.

## 4.4 Findings and Recommendations

### Findings

Analysis of data collected from individuals aged 20 to 30 yielded several important insights highlighting the link between narcissistic traits and online revenge behaviors. These findings provide a better understanding of the digital psychology and behaviors of young adults on social media.

#### 1. Prevalence of Narcissistic Traits

The data reveal that a significant proportion of respondents exhibit occasional narcissistic behaviors. These behaviors generally manifest as a sense of self-importance, fantasizing about significant achievements, or exaggerating their personal successes on social media. Although these traits were noted, they do not dominate the personalities of most respondents.

Traits such as the need for admiration (constantly seeking "likes," comments, or recognition) and feelings of jealousy when others received more attention were present, but mild to moderate degrees. This suggests that, while narcissistic tendencies exist within this demographic, they are not primarily pathological in nature. Rather, they reflect a more normalized version of narcissism, which modern digital environments seem to foster and

validate to some extent.

## 2. Link between narcissism and online revenge

A strong positive correlation was found between certain narcissistic traits, including a sense of entitlement and self-importance, and online revenge behaviors. Participants who scored higher on indicators of narcissism were significantly more likely to react aggressively when they felt criticized, ignored, or insufficiently admired on social media.

These reactions ranged from posting passive-aggressive comments to retaliating with negative posts, unfollowing or blocking people out of spite, and, in more extreme cases, public shaming or online arguments. The results suggest that, for individuals with heightened narcissistic tendencies, criticism on social media undermines their fragile self-esteem, triggering defensive and retaliatory behaviors aimed at reasserting their dominance or superiority.

## 3. Cyberbullying and Digital Aggression

A significant percentage of respondents reported witnessing or directly engaging in acts of online revenge or digital aggression. This involvement included behaviors such as spreading rumors, exchanging heated comments, public shaming, and even subtle forms of cyberbullying such as sarcastic posts or exclusion from online groups.

The data highlight that cyberbullying remains a persistent problem among young adults, fueled in part by the anonymity, immediacy, and emotional disinhibition offered by online platforms. While not all respondents admitted to personally engaging in aggressive behavior, many acknowledged observing such patterns in their circles, suggesting that online aggression is still normalized, or at least tolerated, among young people.

## 4. Social Responsibility and Awareness

It is encouraging to note that, despite the presence of narcissistic traits, many participants demonstrated a high degree of digital responsibility. A majority of them reported reporting abusive content, unfollowing toxic accounts, or taking a stand against cyberbullying when they experienced it.

Nearly half of the respondents indicated that they had actively intervened in cases of online harassment or targeting, either by offering support to the victim or confronting the perpetrator. This growing sense of awareness and responsibility reflects a growing digital consciousness among young adults, suggesting that, despite the existence of negative behaviors, positive digital citizenship is also gaining ground among this group.

## 5. Fantasies and Validation-Seeking

A large number of participants admitted to fantasizing about success, fame, or admiration, often imagining themselves achieving exceptional recognition in their field or on social media. While this type of daydreaming is considered a normal part of psychological development and aspirations, the results indicate that unmet expectations sometimes lead to emotional consequences.

For a subset of people, the discrepancy between their idealized self-image and actual recognition triggered feelings of frustration, resentment, and, sometimes, online revenge behaviors. These behaviors included passive-aggressive posts, bitter comments, or withdrawing from social interactions as a form of silent retaliation. This highlights the delicate interplay between self-image, external validation, and emotional regulation in the digital age.

Overall, the results of this study show that narcissistic traits and online revenge behaviors are indeed interconnected among young adults, but the picture is complex. While narcissistic tendencies can lead to aggressive online behavior, many young people also develop a strong sense of digital responsibility, demonstrating resilience and social awareness in managing their online interactions.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the study findings, the following recommendations aim to address the challenges posed by narcissistic traits and online revenge behaviors among young adults. These strategies aim to promote healthier digital engagement, emotional resilience, and stronger community support.

#### 1. Digital Education and Emotional Awareness Programs

To equip young people with the tools necessary for healthy online interaction, digital education programs should be systematically implemented in schools, universities, and businesses. These programs would teach participants how to manage their online self-image, set realistic expectations for social media interactions, and practice good online etiquette. Training should include how to constructively handle criticism, recognize disproportionate emotional reactions, and strategies to avoid impulsive retaliatory behavior.

At the same time, emotional intelligence (EI) training should be integrated into these initiatives. This would help young people identify and regulate complex emotions such as jealousy, anger, resentment, and disappointment, which often fuel online revenge behavior. By fostering self-awareness, empathy, and healthy coping mechanisms, these programs can significantly reduce negative online interactions.

## 2. Parental and Educational Interventions

The family environment plays a crucial role in the early development of personality traits, particularly narcissism. Parents must be taught to adopt balanced parenting strategies: avoiding excessive praise, which can fuel a sense of entitlement, as well as neglect, which can lead to insecurity and excessive self-centeredness later in life.

Workshops and counseling sessions for parents can help them develop realistic self-esteem in their children, promote resilience, and encourage intrinsic self-esteem rather than external validation. Educational institutions can also contribute by implementing life skills programs from an early age. These programs should emphasize the development of empathy, cooperative skills, conflict resolution, and healthy self-expression. Encouraging young people to derive their self-esteem from their personal development and contribution rather than simply from validation from social networks would help build more emotionally stable individuals.

## 3. Promote positive use of social media

A cultural shift in the perception and use of social media is essential. Users should be encouraged to view social media platforms as tools for collaboration, sharing, and learning rather than as spaces for competition and comparison. Campaigns, perhaps led by influencers and public figures, could emphasize the importance of authenticity, kindness, and constructive online interactions. Social media platforms themselves can play a proactive role by integrating content moderation features that detect potentially aggressive or vengeful posts.

For example, pre-post messages or alerts could remind users to rethink their tone and encourage respectful communication. Implementing "cool-off" features—which encourage users to wait before posting emotionally charged responses—could also help reduce impulsive digital aggression.

#### 4. Stricter Regulations on Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying remains a serious and persistent problem. Governments and social media platforms must collaborate to create and enforce clear and rigorous regulations against online harassment and revenge behavior. This includes developing transparent, easily accessible reporting mechanisms that ensure prompt and appropriate action against perpetrators. Victims of cyberbullying should be provided with mental health support services, including hotlines, virtual therapy options, and online safety workshops. Providing victims with a safe and supportive environment would allow them to speak out and seek help without fear of judgment or retaliation. Awareness campaigns can also inform the public of their digital rights and the remedies available in cases of cyberbullying.

#### 5. Further Research and Monitoring

Given the evolution of digital interactions, continued research on the link between narcissism and online behavior is essential. Future studies should include larger and more diverse samples, incorporating various socioeconomic backgrounds, cultures, and geographic locations, to better understand the phenomenon.

Furthermore, longitudinal studies are recommended to observe the evolution of narcissistic traits and digital revenge behaviors over time. Tracking these trends at different stages of life, from adolescence to adulthood, can provide valuable insights into key intervention points. Such research would not only deepen theoretical knowledge but also guide the development of more targeted and effective interventions for different age groups and cultural contexts.

In summary, addressing the challenges of narcissism and online revenge behaviors requires a multifaceted approach combining education, emotional development, regulatory measures, positive digital practices, and ongoing research. By fostering a generation of more emotionally intelligent and socially responsible digital citizens, the negative impacts of narcissistic traits on online communities can be significantly mitigated.

## 4.5 Limitations of the Study

While this research provides relevant insights into the relationship between narcissism and online revenge behaviors among young adults, certain limitations must be considered to fully understand the scope and limitations of the findings. These limitations also highlight avenues for improvement in future research.

### 1. Limited Sample Size and Scope

The study was conducted with a relatively small sample, limited to individuals aged 20 to 30, primarily from urban and tech-savvy populations. The non-probability convenience sampling method further limits the generalizability of the results.

Since participant selection was based on their availability and willingness, there is a risk of selection bias: those who chose to respond may have similar characteristics, making the sample less representative of the youth population as a whole.

Therefore, the conclusions drawn may not accurately reflect the behaviors or attitudes of other age groups (such as adolescents or the elderly) or populations with different levels of access and technological literacy, such as those living in rural or non-urban areas.

### 2. Self-Reported Data

All information collected is based on self-report questionnaires, which inherently present several types of response bias. One of the main issues is social desirability bias, where respondents may answer questions in a way they deem socially acceptable rather than being entirely honest. This could lead to underreporting of narcissistic traits or minimizing revenge behaviors.

Furthermore, some participants may lack the self-awareness to accurately assess their own emotional triggers and online behaviors. Thus, while the questionnaire captures perceptions and self-reports, it may not fully reflect actual behavior or psychological conditions.

### 3. Lack of Clinical Assessment

The study used adapted versions of standard scales such as the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI) to assess traits, but no clinical diagnostic tools or assessments by mental health professionals were used. Therefore, it is difficult to distinguish normal levels of

narcissistic traits (which can exist in healthy individuals) from more pathological forms such as narcissistic personality disorder (NPD), which require rigorous clinical assessment. Without clinical validation, the study remains in the realm of behavioral and self-reported tendencies rather than a formal psychological diagnosis, which may affect the depth of psychological conclusions that can be drawn.

#### 4. Cross-Sectional Design

The research was conducted cross-sectionally, meaning that all data were collected at a single point in time. This approach limits the ability to establish causal links between narcissism and online revenge behavior. While the study identifies correlations and associations, it cannot definitively state whether narcissistic traits cause revenge behavior or whether certain social media experiences intensify narcissistic tendencies. Furthermore, no longitudinal trends, such as changes in narcissistic traits or individuals' online behaviors over time, particularly as they mature or experience emotional growth, could be observed.

#### 5. Cultural and Regional Bias

Participants were predominantly from a specific region, most likely young urban Indians, given distribution patterns and context. Cultural factors strongly influence self-expression and behavior on social media. In collectivist societies like India, for example, the expression of self-importance may be perceived differently than in more individualistic cultures. Therefore, the findings may be difficult to transfer to other global populations where cultural norms, digital usage habits, and societal views of narcissism differ significantly. Larger cross-cultural studies would be needed to validate whether these trends are universal or context-specific.

#### 6. No Platform-Specific Analysis

Although the study addresses social media behavior in general, it does not distinguish between platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, or newer spaces like TikTok and Threads. Each platform has unique characteristics: for example, Instagram prioritizes visual self-presentation, while Twitter encourages verbal exchanges and the sharing of opinions. Consequently, users may exhibit different behaviors and emotional reactions depending on the platform they use. By not conducting a platform-specific analysis, the study misses an opportunity to explore whether some digital environments are more conducive than others to the development of narcissism and online revenge behaviors.

The objective of this study was to examine the connection between narcissistic personality traits and online revenge behavior, specifically focusing on young adults aged 20 to 30 who frequently engage with social media platforms. In the modern era of constant connectivity, where self-presentation and social validation have become essential aspects of everyday interactions, it is imperative to comprehend how psychological traits shape digital behavior. The findings indicate that narcissistic characteristics like entitlement, excessive self-importance, grandiose fantasies of success, and a strong desire for admiration are indeed observed in this group.

Nevertheless, it is crucial to understand that the existence of narcissistic traits does not guarantee the manifestation of harmful or aggressive actions. Numerous people may display subtle signs of narcissism—such as seeking approval or portraying themselves favorably on social media—without engaging in harmful behaviors. This emphasizes that narcissism, in small amounts, can be a normal part of psychological growth and the development of self-confidence.

However, the study discovered a strong positive relationship between increased narcissistic tendencies and engaging in online revenge actions. People with high levels of narcissism were more inclined to engage in aggressive online behavior when they felt ignored, criticized, rejected, or when their online self-image was at risk. This inclination could be displayed through actions like making sarcastic remarks, publicly criticizing, seeking revenge through messages, and even engaging in cyberbullying. These reactions are not solely driven by anger, but are rooted in deeper emotional vulnerabilities, such as insecurity, heightened sensitivity to criticism, and a strong desire to uphold a perfect or idealized self-image.

Social media platforms, with their continuous feedback loops of likes, shares, and comments, can inadvertently amplify these emotional triggers. The absence of validation or the perception of being offended can trigger a cycle of irritation and retaliation, especially among individuals with fragile self-esteem concealed by narcissistic defenses. The study also emphasizes some positive developments. A substantial number of participants demonstrated increasing digital proficiency and accountability.

Numerous individuals shared their experiences of actively reporting abusive content, advocating against cyberbullying, and prioritizing respectful online communication.

This implies that, despite ongoing difficulties, a budding culture of digital empathy and ethical online behavior is emerging among the younger generation. These positive changes indicate that interventions and education can have a significant impact. Emotional education, which encompasses self-awareness, empathy development, conflict resolution, and resilience building, should be seamlessly integrated into education systems from an early age. Emotional intelligence training can assist individuals in effectively handling emotions such as jealousy, anger, and rejection, thereby minimizing the likelihood of impulsive or retaliatory online actions.

Parenting practices also play a vital role. Striking a balance in nurturing children's self-esteem—avoiding excessive praise and harsh criticism—can promote healthier personal growth and decrease the likelihood of developing pathological narcissistic traits in the future. Parents should set a good example by demonstrating responsible digital behavior and engage in open discussions with their children about their online experiences and emotional responses.

Digital literacy programs should also be prioritized. Educating young individuals on responsible digital navigation, comprehending the dangers of impulsive online actions, and promoting respectful online communication can establish a safer and more positive social atmosphere. Social media platforms should actively participate in the implementation of prevention tools, including warnings against aggressive language and the establishment of straightforward reporting mechanisms for abusive behavior.

Ultimately, this study emphasizes the importance of further investigation into the development of psychological traits within digital ecosystems. As technology progresses and new platforms emerge, it will be crucial to continuously monitor and adapt intervention strategies.

In summary, although narcissistic tendencies can occasionally result in negative online actions, these patterns are not set in stone and can be changed. By working together, involving individuals, families, educators, policymakers, and technology companies, it is achievable to create digital communities that are emotionally intelligent and respectful. By promoting self-awareness, empathy, and responsible online behavior, we can minimize the potential dangers posed by narcissism and create an internet environment that encourages positive connections, personal growth, and collective support.

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## QUESTIONNAIRE

Ques 1 - Do you experience an exaggerated sense of self-importance?

- a) Never
- b) Rarely
- c) Sometimes
- d) Often
- e) Very Often

Ques 2 - Do you expect to be seen as superior to other people?

- a) Never
- b) Rarely
- c) Sometimes
- d) Often
- e) Very Often

Ques 3 - Do you ever exaggerate your talents or accomplishments?

- a) Never
- b) Rarely
- c) Sometimes
- d) Often
- e) Very Often

Ques 4 - Do you require constant admiration from others?

- a) Never
- b) Rarely
- c) Sometimes
- d) Often
- e) Very Often

Ques 5 - Do you engage in fantasies about being successful, powerful, or beautiful?

- a) Never
- b) Rarely
- c) Sometimes
- d) Often
- e) Very Often

Ques 6 - Do others perceive you as arrogant or haughty?

- a) Never
- b) Rarely
- c) Sometimes
- d) Often
- e) Very Often

Ques 7 - How likely are you to experience heightened jealousy about the success or accomplishments of others?

- a) Never
- b) Rarely
- c) Sometimes
- d) Often
- e) Very Often

Ques 8 - Have you ever seen any known person who has taken online revenge?

- a) Yes
- b) No

Ques 9 - Have you ever stood up against cyberbullying?

- a) Yes
- b) No

Ques 10 - How do you behave when you don't like a particular content?

- a) Report it as abuse
- b) Write something in against
- c) Ignore it
- d) None of these